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EXCERPTS FROM SUMMARY OF THE REPORT OF THE AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR TO INDONESIA, H.E. Mr. F.R. DALRYMPLE, ON HIS VISIT TO EAST TIMOR ON 4 - 7 JULY 1984

Call on Governor Carrascalao *

Regarding the security situation, the governor said there had been a considerable improvement since December last year. During the later months of last year Fretilin had mounted a series of attacks by armed operations which had been successful. Since the end of last year Fretilin had operated only in groups of two or three, extorting supplies from villages, occasionally burning down a village or some building, and occasionally killing someone. They would then disappear and it was very hard indeed to catch these people operating singly or in twos and threes because when not active they either went back to normal activities among the populace or disappeared in the hills. But it had become now a matter of nuisance value only and not an impediment to development or other government activities as it had been for a time during the operations last year. The improvement in the security situation could be seen in various ways including the fact that government officials and others now travelled freely around the province by road. For example, the head of the local parliament from Los Palos had arrived that morning by car to see the governor, having driven himself to Dili. There was also evidence that previously abandoned settlements had been reoccupied. It was mentioned that Fretilin had allegedly been encouraged by the visit to East Timor in July 1983 of the Australian Parliamentary Delegation. Mr. Carrascalao said that the East Timorese were very credulous and that in his view the resurgence of Fretilin activity in August 1983 had been affected by the visit and that recent publicity over the visit to Australia by Fretilin's representative at the United Nations, Ramos Horta, had given Fretilin further encouragement. The publicity beamed in day after day by radio Australia was used by Fretilin and complicated the government's task.

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* The Governor of East Timor, Mr. M.V. Carrascalao, a native East Timorese.

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The governor said that despite the temporary encouragement, Fretilin was a declining factor and it must be obvious that they would be gradually whittled away. In the meantime, the government's task was to improve the lot of the people and much had been done in that regard. He had now better system and better people in place and in the current five year plan there would be a great advance.

Visit to Manatuto

On 5 July Mr. Dalrymple visited Manatuto to inspect a 240 metre steel bridge provided under the Australian aid programme. Construction was almost complete and the bridge was expected to be finished by mid-August. This had been done by Indonesian public works engineers and without the presence of Australian advisers. Mr. Dalrymple visited the local church, at his own request, and found it in good condition, much used and well cared for.

Call on Provincial Secretary

During a call on the Provincial Secretary, Lt.Col. Sarijo, a presentation was given on the main development programmes. By 1990 the roads linking all the main cities will be all-weather asphalt providing a grid across the territory and its length both North and South. East Timor now had a higher ratio of doctors to population than any of the Indonesian Provinces (1 : 7000) and it had a rapidly expanding network of health care centres (PUSKESMAS) at present numbering 28 with 101 substations. There were now three public hospitals as against only one in Portuguese times (plus two military hospitals at least one of which would eventually become a public hospital). The incidence of the most serious disease, malaria, had been considerably reduced although much still needed to be done. By the end of this five year plan, in 1990, East Timor would be not only self-sufficient in food crops but have a small exportable surplus. Illiteracy had been reduced from 85 percent under the Portuguese to 65 percent now and there were now nearly four times as many schools as in 1977. Sarijo

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said one of the most encouraging things was that the demand for education was rising even faster and in 1983 a total of 90.000 children (out of a population of 555.000) had sought enrollment as compared with 20.000 in 1979. There were 400 young East Timorese at universities and other institutions in other parts of Indonesia being trained at government expense. A big problem had been to get teachers to come to Timor but that was being overcome in two ways : training East Timorese primary and junior secondary teachers(at present fifty in training in Dili) and by inducements to others from outside. It was explained that there had been a general problem getting a good quality Indonesian public servants to come and work in East Timor. There was now a 173 percent loading on basic salaries (so that all officials receive a total pay of 273 percent of basic salary) and for that and a range of other reasons that were less clear, the most recent advertisement for volunteers had produced a very good result, many more than required so that they were in a position now to be quite selective.

Visit to Atauro

On Friday 6 July Mr. Dalrymple visited the detention centre on Atauro island which contained 2153 persons. This number had been constant (except for natural increase) for the last 12 months as plans to return the people to the mainland were put off when the fighting erupted again last August. It was explained that within the next few weeks the programme of returning people to their places of origin would be resumed and that if there were no unforeseen emergency, all the Atauro inmates would be returned during the next months. The people on Atauro generally appeared to be in good condition and there was sufficient (though monotonous) food, there were three schools and three basic facilities.

Catholic Relief Services Project

At the Catholic Relief Services project a Rainate near Sare, south west of Dili, it was clear that USAID's US $ 5 million was being well spent. New plant strains especially of lamtoro and papaya, were being developed and new methods of transplanting rice seedlings.

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Call on the Apostolic Administrator

On 6 July, Mr. Dalrymple, at his own request, was able to call on the Apostolic Administrator, Monsignor Belo. He explained that he was short of priests but that he hoped to overcome this by sending trainees to the seminary in Flores. The human rights situation was discussed.

Call on Military Headquarters

On 7 July, during a call on the Dili Military Headquarters, it was explained that the security situation was under control and that the Fretilin were reduced to occasional acts of terrorism by two or three people. Asked why such a substantial number of troops was required, it was pointed out that a substantial proportion were needed for developments projects. This explanation was substantiated by the governor on the basis that many projects were remote and civilian contractors were not interested. A "labour sharing" arrangement had been worked out with the army. Village security also required troops.

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